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A CASE STUDY OF DELINQUENT BOYS IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF CHICAGO

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I. POINT OF VIEW AND MATERIAL

This statistical investigation of one hundred cases of delinquent boys has been undertaken in the spirit of a one-time professional worker among such boys and their families, as well as that of a student of sociology and criminology. It will constantly call up investigative methods, information, and point of view acquired during a year's employment in Syracuse, N. Y., by a society practically combining the work of charity organization with that of juvenile court probation officers. From a more academic standpoint, it will also be in line with a later study of juvenile offenders whose police records in the same city were of six to ten years' standing—the object being to ascertain present condition and status of ninety such boys; the method, detailed inquiry into the individual cases, involving a large amount of visitation.

In the present study the *object proposed* was the investigation of family conditions, in each case, as causally affecting the conduct of the child. In connection with the location of the family home this naturally ramifies into consideration of practically the boy's whole environment.

The writer fully realized that only comparatively superficial facts could be brought out in the time and with the opportunities at command; but experience had also taught the heart-breaking obviousness of causes of juvenile delinquency in very many cases, and inspired the hope that it might prove well worth while to set forth in tabulated form some of these same obvious causes. We all know that loss of parent, lack of home comforts and necessities, proximity of boy gangs or resorts of vice, etc., have a demoralizing effect on the young. But it has never been deter-

mined in what proportion these various causes act; and though for the present it is doubtless impossible to do so, still investigation of such a typical list of one hundred as forms the basis of this study can hardly fail to shed at least a ray of light upon the problem.

These 100 cases were taken from the juvenile court records for the summer of 1905, that being the time at which the investigation was begun. It seemed advisable to have the cases as fresh as possible, and also to include only boys paroled or sentenced in town, whom probation officers would be fairly sure to know, since these officers must be relied upon for most of the detailed data to supplement official records. On this principle a list of about 175 was made from the court cases for ten summer weeks in June, July, and August, excluding mere dependents, all boys discharged or sent out of town, and all the girls, since delinquency among girls is rather a matter of vice than incipient criminality, and constitutes a distinct problem, closely allied, indeed, to that of boys, but not most profitably studied when undifferentiated from it. These cases were then classified according to the probation officers involved, and used as a basis for specific inquiries made to them. The final result is a list of one hundred about whom sufficient information was obtained to admit of tabulation.¹

As a prime requisite for value in such investigation is that the material itself be typical, certain general comparisons have been made, by way of test, between statistics derived from this list and from the official report of the Chicago Juvenile Court for 1905. The latter includes 2,000 cases in all. These are, however, never summarized, but are given by first, second, third, fourth offense, etc. As the first offenders, 1,300, constitute about 65 per cent. of all, the statistics given for them have been

¹ For my material as a whole I am absolutely indebted to the courtesy and detailed assistance of the officials of the Juvenile Court of Chicago. They have given me access to the record files, desk-room in their offices, kindness and courtesy on all occasions, advice and explanation wherever needed; and finally over twenty of the field probation officers have patiently gone through the entire list of cases with me, answering questions and giving detailed information with a care equaled only by their invariable kindness and interest. I wish to express my heartiest gratitude to them all.

used for comparisons of parental religion and nativity; for age and offense, however, where first offenders would not naturally show the same proportions as the whole list, totals for the entire 2,000 have been reckoned and used. The following tabulations summarize results:

COMPARISON OF AGES BETWEEN SPECIAL LIST OF 100 AND ALL CASES OF THE YEAR

Ages	Per Cent. of 100 Cases	Per Cent. of 2,000 Cases
7	0%	0.3%
8	2	0.9
9	4	2.5
10	3	4.9
11	10	8.0
12	9	12.7
13	15	16.0
14	19	17.0
15	19	23.4
16	18	13.5
17	1	0.8
	100	100.0

The grand average for the 100 cases is 13.51 years; for the 2,000, 13.48. As to age, then, we may consider that our list is fairly typical. This is true also of religious affiliation.

COMPARISON OF STATISTICS OF RELIGION

	For 100 Cases	For 1,300 Cases
Catholic	52.0%	54.4%
Protestant	36.5	34.6
Jewish	6.0	7.0
Unknown	5.5	4.0
	100.0	100.0

The only striking discrepancy is in the proportions of Poles, for which no explanation is at hand. For the whole 2,000 cases the percentage is 14.2, instead of 15.9.

In comparing the following statistics of offenses for the hundred cases with those of the entire year, it must be remembered that (according to Ferri *et al.*) crime always varies in the direction of more violence in the summer season. That is, with adults there is said to be less crime against property and more against persons in the heated term. Boys, especially the younger

element, are not likely to commit much personal violence serious enough to be so classed at any time; with them this seasonal crime tendency may rather be expected to take the form of more adven-

STATISTICS OF PARENTS' NATIVITY FOR 100 AND FOR 1,300 CASES

	100 Cases	1,300 Cases		100 Cases	1,000 Cases
German.....	19.0%	17.0%	Jewish.....	2.0	7.0
American.....	15.0	16.8	Slav.....	...	0.2
Irish.....	12.5	11.4	Great Britain.....	3.0	2.5
Italian.....	10.0	6.6	French.....	2.0	1.2
Polish.....	8.0	15.9	Greek.....	1.0	0.2
Scandinavian.....	7.5	6.9	Dutch.....	1.0	0.2
Bohemian.....	4.0	4.6	Swiss.....	1.0	0.2
Negro.....	4.0	4.2	Canadian.....	0.5	0.7
Russian Jews.....	4.0	...	Not stated.....	5.5	3.2
				100.0	98.8*

* The remaining 1 per cent. of the official list is divided equally between Austrians, Hungarians, and Lithuanians, none of whom appear among the hundred of our study.

turous wrong-doing, misdeeds in which there is larger element of risk and violence in general. Partly because of this fact that summer cases might be expected to differ from yearly averages, and partly through personal interest, the writer has extended this comparison to the cases formerly investigated in Syracuse, N. Y. The

COMPARISON OF OFFENCES FOR 100 AND 2,000 CHICAGO CASES AND FOR 87 FROM SYRACUSE, N. Y.

	CHICAGO		SYRACUSE
	100 Summer Cases	2,000 Cases for the Year	87 Summer Cases
Larceny.....	35.0%	38.4%	38.0%
Incorrigibility.....	27.0	25.0	25.0*
Burglary.....	13.0	5.8	3.5
Assault.....	6.0	7.8	7.0
Mischief.....	4.0	2.9	17.5
Breaking city ordinances.....	1.0	1.7	9.0
Disorder.....	3.0	13.3	...
Railroad depredations.....	10.0	1.6	...
Forgery.....	1.0	0.5	...
Robbery.....	...	1.8	...
Selling transfers.....	...	1.2	...
	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Classed as "truancy and vagrancy" and as "lack of proper guardianship" on Syracuse records, but actual incorrigibility by Chicago standards.

latter were almost all entered in the summer of 1892. The average age for 91 boys was 13.23 years, slightly lower than that of the Chicago cases—13.51 for the 100 and 13.48 for the 2,000—as boys over 16 were not then considered juvenile offenders. Statistics for the three series of delinquents follow, in tabular form, four of the Syracuse cases being omitted as giving no data under this head.

Of course, some of the differences between Syracuse and Chicago statistics are merely those of classification and nomenclature. For instance, "malicious mischief" in Syracuse would include "railroad depredations" and probably much of what is classed under disorder in Chicago. "Flipping cars" is the only specified offense against city ordinances in Chicago; while in Syracuse such offenses include playing ball in the streets, swimming naked, Fourth of July pranks, and such minor matters, practically none of which have been found on our special list; they might appear in analysis of the cases of disorder for the entire year. If we add together cases of mischief, disorder, and railroad depredations in Chicago, we have substantially the same percentages for the totals as that for mischief alone in Syracuse—17 for the 100 cases, and 17.8 for the 2,000, against 17.5 for Syracuse. This would be very largely, if not entirely, justified by the real correspondences behind the figures.

Contrary to expectation, disagreements between the two Chicago columns are seen to be accentuated rather than otherwise by Syracuse figures. These disagreements are in percentages of disorder, and of burglary and railroad depredations—the latter also technically burglary, as each of the ten cases consists in breaking the seal of a freight-car. In disorder the 2,000 cases lead; in burglary, etc., the 100 show a very disproportionately high percentage. No explanation has been found for the excessive amount in Chicago of burglary so classed in the table. It is, of course, of the shed and barn type almost wholly—no real professional house-breaking—but even at that the figures are appalling. One is left to the cold comfort that possibly the summer of 1905, with its protracted teamsters' strike and consequent preoccupation of the police and resulting "carnival of crime," was

unusually rich in suggestion to more serious offenses. It is, however, entirely possible that the 100 cases are not typical in this regard even for the particular season. The excessive number of railroad depredations would be raised still higher by addition of the 11 cases of stealing from railroads that, in accordance with the precedent of the official report, have been classed simply as larceny in the table. Five of these also involved breaking into cars—technical burglary. This makes 21 per cent. of all our cases of offenses against the railroads that run through the city—not local systems of transportation, but the freight-carrying roads. Undoubtedly this offense is really very common, so many of the poorer quarters from which young delinquents come being located along railway tracks where temptation is constantly at hand; but it must be explained that at just this time such offenders stood a much greater chance of being caught than did others, because the railroads had a special force of detectives in their employ whose exclusive business it was to protect their property. These men naturally were not concerned for the individual boy; whether or not he really belonged in juvenile court, or even was actually guilty, was a minor consideration; the main thing was to check the depredations. Then, too, finding the boys in groups, they would bring them all into court together, inferring the complicity of all in the guilt of one. The 21 boys were brought in in 12 groups; 5 of them are pronounced good boys by the probation officers, and 3 more are among those classed in our final chapter as not characteristically delinquent—young “accidental criminals,” so to speak. Such boys do not properly belong in a list of juvenile delinquents, so far as their morals are concerned; but, on the other hand, there is always likely to be just such a contingent in any list taken by chance selection from court records; and ours is not, therefore, the less typical.

It may be remarked in passing that only 19 out of the entire 100 were judged sufficiently hard cases to be sent to the city reformatory. The rest were simply put on probation or “continued indefinitely” (in 4 cases), which amounted to practically the same thing in these instances.

On the whole, then, we may regard our material as very fairly representative of the varieties of boy and of home that furnish us with juvenile delinquents, if not in the country at large, at least in Chicago, and presumptively also in our other cosmopolitan towns of sufficient size to exhibit vicious and congested quarters of considerable area. We may accordingly proceed to our study of conditions in each case, with reasonable hope that conclusions drawn therefrom will be valid in the main as to causes of juvenile delinquency under our American city conditions in general.

II. STATEMENT AND GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THESIS

The general thesis of this paper may appear too obvious to require proof. It is simply that particular abnormal conditions, easily discoverable in each case and of obviously desocializing tendency, are sufficient to account for the great bulk of our juvenile delinquency, leaving the inference that such conditions, on closer study, account for it all. That is to say, it is not natural depravity nor blind chance directly determining lawlessness or order that fills our rolls of young offenders; nor even is it chance determining which of those living under generally bad social conditions shall be the ones to show forth the evil effects of these in lawlessness. The last notion subsists in half-developed form with many who would scout one or both of the former. General demoralizing conditions and institutions are indisputably among the causes of crime; and we must recognize the wisdom of those who point out evil tendencies for juvenile delinquency in such things as the prevalence of dishonesty in high places and its advertisement through the sensational press, along with other crime and vice, or perhaps in lack of solid discipline for life in our modern schools with their anxiety to make things interesting and easy for the child, or the still more general desocializing tendencies in the adolescent impulses of even the normal boy. Such examples might be multiplied. These particular ones were given, each as the main cause of juvenile delinquency, by three of the nine probation officers who gave general theories on the subject in discussing cases. Now, undoubtedly these experts know

whereof they speak; such things as these are very likely chief causes—and in the end are probably easier to reach and ameliorate than others more particular; but what we are after in this investigation is *determining* causes—the reasons why Johnnie Smith is bad, while Willie Jones, whose father takes the same paper and who is of the same obstreperous age and goes to the same school, is good, or at least not flagrantly otherwise. And we declare that we can tell why; that it is not a case of chance; that similarities in a typical list of Johnnie Smiths are great enough to warrant inferences of essential connection. We proceed first to summarize and study these similarities of condition, thereby putting concrete content into our thesis, and, second, in a concluding section, to summarize our cases by their causes or their lack of cause, so far as information goes, in a final attempt to substantiate the thesis.

III. CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY AS EXHIBITED IN THE DATA TABULATED

To work out these statistics, our entire mass of data was first incorporated as 100 skeleton monographs in one huge table, each of whose columns held the facts for all cases pertinent to its heading. Of all these columns the most striking in its exhibit of abnormal condition was that headed "Conjugal Condition of Parents." Its content is summarized in the following table, which speaks so emphatically for itself that it scarce requires comment.

When we see that 37 per cent. of our cases lack the care of a man and a woman legally their parents, or even stepparents, and living with them, and that 11 more have stepfathers or stepmothers or adopted parents, it surely needs no argument to prove that these 48 per cent. are at very serious disadvantage in the matter of life-training. We cannot wonder that the juvenile court is left to furnish them with some of the restraining influences for which parents are properly responsible. It is significant that of the half-orphans more than twice as many have lost the father as have lost the mother, and that, when adopted and stepparents are considered, three times as many of these boys

CONJUGAL CONDITION OF PARENTS		
Normal.....	53*	cases
Both dead.....	4	"
Father dead.....	21	"
(Stepfather in 6 of these)		
Mother dead.....	10†	"
(Stepmother in 4, adopted mother in 1, of these)		
Parents living apart.....	10	"
Father has deserted.....	2	
Mother has deserted.....	2	
Otherwise separated.....	6‡	
Adopted parents.....	1	"
Mother living with series of men.....	1	"
Total.....	100	"

* Parents still in Germany in 1 case; boy 16 years old.

† Father has deserted child, 1 case; stepmother and child, 1 case.

‡ Fathers merely away for treatment (1 insane, 1 consumptive) in 2 cases.

are without any sort of paternal as are without corresponding maternal care. Similarly of the 10 cases where parents are living apart, the boy is with the father in only 4. Apparently for the sort of "outbreaking sins" that bring youngsters into court the father's strong right arm is a better preventive and corrective than the mother's gentle influence. But we must remember that, where there is no paternal support financially, the mother is likely to be at work for others either in her home or outside. In either case she is probably unable to devote her main time and attention to caring for and training her children, and they suffer lack of both paternal and maternal care. As will appear from the next table, 8 of the 15 widows indicated in the last, and 2 of those separated from their husbands, are known to be so employed.

Because of the obviously very great importance of the *mother's occupation* for the care and training of the child, it was made a special point for inquiry during the whole investigation. Results are summarized below, adopted and stepmothers being included in the list. It is a fact, as significant perhaps as the abnormal conjugal conditions just examined, that in hardly more than half—or 54 per cent. of the cases only—is the mother at home and even nominally free to make her family and household duties her sole business. Sixteen per cent. are either not living at

OCCUPATION OF MOTHERS

At home, not gainfully employed.....	20
At home, not known to be gainfully employed.....	34
Employed by the day at washing and cleaning.....	16*
Otherwise gainfully employed at home.....	10†
Otherwise gainfully employed away from home.....	4‡
Living in separation from the child.....	6
Dead.....	10
Total.....	100

* Five widows.

† Two widows, 1 separated from husband.

‡ One widow, 1 separated from husband. The four are occupied:
as domestics, 2; visiting nurse, 1; in tailor-shop, 1.

all or not living with the child; 20 per cent., if we include the washerwomen, etc., are at work more or less regularly away from home. Of the remaining 10 per cent. that are gainfully employed at home, most, to judge by their occupations, would have their time fairly well filled by their various industries. Two are dressmakers (one a widow and one a drunkard's wife); another widow has an employment agency; a separated wife, possibly immoral, keeps a house for roomers; one woman is a janitress; one, a palmist; another keeps a small boarding-house; and three assist in their husbands' business—respectively, a store, a laundry, and cheese-making in the family living-room. The number known to be regularly employed away from home is unimportant, especially where we note that the tailoress' only son is grown, and that one of the domestics had her boy with her and might therefore be said to have taken the home along. But it is emphatically contended that both irregular employment for the mother for entire days outside the home (when adequate provision for the care of the children is less likely to be made than in case of regular outside work), and full employment with outside work of her conventional working hours within the home, are very great drawbacks in the training of the child. Not only when the tenement is full of people interested in palmistry or in getting employment, or of odors from cheese-making or laundry, but under any circumstances when the mother is trying to care for her house and children as a secondary business, disorder and

discomfort are likely to prevail. It may be that such an unhappy state of things would in any case be the normal one in these particular homes, and that the family is better off with the mother's extra wages than with her extra time, which would be largely wasted anyway in ignorance of what should properly be done. This contention is, indeed, made.² But most of us will cling to the conviction that the mother of little children would much better be on hand with extra time and extra nerve-force for the meeting of emergencies; that the child stands a distinctly better chance of being wisely handled by an untired, even if ignorant, mother than by one exhausted with double work; and that economic conditions making it better in individual cases for the mother to earn money are so much the greater evil.

The *number* in each family is worthy of attention for its bearing both on demands upon the mother's time and on the economic status of the family, the subject to be next considered. In only 76 of the 100 cases is this number given. The comparative lack of large families among them may be matter for surprise, but there is no reason to believe that the other 24 would average larger—rather the contrary. Of the 76 only 44 families have more than 5 members, including parents or guardians; only 3 of these have more than 10. Thirty-two, then, or 42 per cent. of all those known, have 5 or less than 5.

In this general connection it may be well to consider the *paternal occupations*, as indicating social and economic status rather than as directly influencing delinquency. The occupations are not found to be such as would put special temptation or evil example in the boys' way, save possibly in one or two instances. A general classification is given in the table that follows. The "entrepreneurs" are peddler, cheese-maker, saloon-keeper, cigar-dealer, junk-dealer, laundryman, and small storekeeper. The trades are 14, ranging from barber to engraver, and showing never more than 3 individuals. It would be interesting to know in how many cases the father's employment is irregular. Mr.

² See, for example, Mabel Hurd Willett, *Employment of Women in the Clothing Trade*, pp. 204, 205.

John McManaman, former chief probation officer in the Chicago Juvenile Court, in an article on "Causes of Delinquency of Boys" in the *Juvenile Court Record* for April, 1906, says that out of 100 cases investigated he found 45 where the offense was "due to irregular employment of the father and irregular habits in the home."

OCCUPATION OF FATHERS

Unskilled labor	37 cases
Skilled trade.....	21 "
Small entrepreneur	7 "
Miscellaneous	6 "*"
Incapacitated	2 "
Dead.....	19 "
Unknown	8 "†"
Total.....	100 cases

* Car-inspector (2 sons), street-car conductor, salesman, janitor, medical student.

† Half of these are stepfathers.

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF FAMILIES

Own property (usually the home).....	13
Others on comfort level.....	43
Poor.....	20
Very poor (dependent)	16
Unknown.....	8
Total.....	100

Passing to direct evidence on the *economic condition* of our 100 families, we summarize in the above table the facts given. It should be explained that not all those classed as above comfort level actually live comfortably; most of them do so, and all are economically able to. Thirty-six per cent. of the boys come from homes that are poor; that is, homes where the children are presumably not well nourished, nor always hygienically clothed and housed. The significance of this would doubtless be obvious to most readers, yet it may add definiteness to quote here some recent statistics on the physical effects of poverty that have been worked out by the eminent Italian, Alfredo Niceforo, from measurements of Swiss school children, and set forth in his book *Les classes pauvres*, published as a volume in the "Bibliothèque sociologique internationale" in 1905. Niceforo measured 918 boys for height, weight, strength (pressure of the right hand in kilos), chest girth, and respiration; he also made head-measure-

ments of 703 boys. Considering as "poor" the sons of ordinary skilled workmen and day laborers, and as "comfortable" those whose fathers were clerks, merchants, and professional men, he summarized results in numerous tables, of which the one here given is typical:

FIFTY SONS OF MASONS (A) AND FIFTY SONS OF PROFESSIONAL MEN (B)

Age 9	Average Height	Average Weight	Average Strength	Average Chest Girth	Chest Expansion
A	122.5 cm.	21.8 k	12.3 k	58.4 cm.	4.7 cm.
B	129.3	25.5	13.7	58.7	5.1

Head and face anomalies also show a tendency in favor of the well-to-do. For example, among 70 of the poor children 135 such anomalies were found, as against 94 among 70 of the comfortable class.³ For a third intermediate class, the small tradesmen and lesser clerks (*employés*) were abstracted from the comfortable class, and parallel statistics were tabulated for the three types of children,⁴ indicating plainly that a degree of physical difference corresponds to each of the three degrees of economic comfort. Tests of endurance brought similar results: in making ten strokes of the dynamometer, the poorer children showed a marked relative falling-off in force after the fifth stroke.⁵ Psychic inferiority also is posited as characteristic of those reared in comparative poverty. Part III of the same work is given up to evidence and discussion under this head. Now statistics have also been assembled to show that juvenile delinquents are drawn more largely from the ranks of these slightly (or more than slightly) defective boys than from among normal and well-developed children. In evidence we may cite the testimony of recent reports of the Chicago Parental School (for truants) and the Child Study Department of the same city. In the former we have the statement,⁶ based on tables scattered through the report, "that about 17 or 18 per cent. of the truant class are decidedly below normal, physically and mentally, as against 10 per cent. of other public-school children." This is a statement of permanent defect, and

³ See *Les classes pauvres*, p. 55, table.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30, table.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-43.

⁶ Report of 1904, p. 49.

not of curable condition due immediately to unhygienic life at home before commitment.⁷ The inferiority is manifest as defects in growth, in bodily functions, and in strength, and as disturbances in motion (over-excitability, sluggishness, or lack of co-ordination), and in sensation.⁸ Similar testimony comes from the John Worthy School, the Chicago city reformatory for boys, to which 19 of our cases were committed. In comparing measurements of 284 inmates "with the norms obtained by measuring normal children," it was found that the former were inferior in all physical measurements taken—an inferiority that seemed to increase with age.⁹

An essential connection between intellectual and physical conditions in children is pretty generally admitted. Dr. W. Townsend Porter's examination of 33,500 St. Louis school children in 1892 went far to prove it;¹⁰ and a further test of Dr. Porter's proposition by W. S. Christopher, M. D., with Chicago school children lent further confirmation. Dr. Christopher's report, as read before the American Pediatric Society in 1900, includes most instructive charts, showing the increased height, weight, vital capacity, and strength of grip of twelve-year-old children as they are found in ascending grades of the public schools. Defects among backward pupils he also discovered in marked number and degree.

This long digression may seem good evidence for the proposition that one argues most for the weakest point. It is not, however, intended to demonstrate that because 36 of our cases are poor, therefore those particular 36 are necessarily bad, but merely to show the general connection between poverty and delinquency by statistical methods, as well as by appeal to the popular judgment that a child who is undernourished, undersized, and defectively equipped mentally cannot be expected to

⁷ The amount of the latter is startlingly indicated by the statement on p. 10 that "a majority of these boys enter the Parental School distinctly below normal."

⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 14; also tables, pp. 15, 23, 26.

⁹ See Report of the Child Study Department for 1899-1900, p. 4.

¹⁰ See Reports of the American Statistical Association for 1893.

take right views of what ought and what ought not to be done, or to exercise full will-power in resisting his temptations. The digression may serve a second purpose in substituting general averages for the particular figures of physical and mental measurements and tests quite impossible to make for our 100 cases.¹¹ Although we know positively of defects in only 10 of them—4 mentally subnormal to greater or less degree, 3 weak-willed, 1 showing results of opium-smoking, 1 with harelip, and 1 with a deaf ear—yet we may reasonably assume that a much greater number, though probably not the full majority indicated for boys actually committed to the Parental School, are really under smaller or greater handicap of this kind; and we must mentally reserve room for this point in our final summaries of causes.

Returning to the homes of our 100 boys (including but three pairs of brothers), we may spend a moment on the *condition of the home* as indicated in a rather general way by answers to the question whether or not the family is living under fairly hygienic conditions, in a state of reasonable order and peace, and apart from evil associations inside the home itself. A dark, unhealthy basement is not classified as good, even if the tenants manage with it as well as could be expected; but usually the condition of the home reflects pretty directly the character and efficiency of the parents. It was found to be good in 35 cases, fair in 31, bad in 30, and questionable, though not definitely known, in 3. One lad was homeless. In connection with parental character these data will be largely incorporated in the concluding section.

In classifying *neighborhoods* a more inclusive table has been made, showing not only the general character of each particular locality as good, bad, or fair from the standpoint of its probable moral influences upon the boy, but also the kind of street itself from a more external point of view, which will easily explain itself. The two classifications manifestly overlap; streets indisputably vicious would, of course, have a bad influence on the child living there; but so would a reputable street in or near which there are

¹¹ While, as summer cases, none of these were sent to the Parental School, yet they are distinctly of the truant type. Eighteen were officially reported truant, and only six were known to attend school regularly.

bad gangs, or where there are notable congestion and bad housing conditions, with their less direct, but perhaps equally certain, tendencies for evil. These two kinds of neighborhoods—or single street on the one hand and neighborhood on the other—should obviously not be classed absolutely as one.

CLASSIFICATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS

	Good	Fair	Bad	Un- known	Totals
Poor but decent streets not included below	3	15	11	..	29
Vicious streets . . . . .	..	..	17	..	17*
Comfortable streets not thoroughfares	10	7	..	..	17
Thoroughfares (not vicious)	3	5	8	..	16
Outskirts	2	10	..	2	14
Stockyard district . . . . .	..	2	..	5	7†
Total	18	39	36	7	100

*Eight thoroughfares included.

†One thoroughfare included.

For a bit of possibly significant comparison a somewhat similar classification of neighborhoods in 91 Syracuse cases has been abstracted from the study previously referred to. This was a single classification in which those neighborhoods not unquestionably either bad or good were divided into thoroughfares, fairly comfortable and also poor streets not thoroughfares (classed together as "decent streets"), outskirts, and "Jewry" (a section of the town more analogous to the cheaper metropolitan business streets, including thoroughfares and some congested blocks). To reduce Chicago figures to a basis approximating this, we (1) add together those in the column headed "good;" (2) take the "vicious streets;" (3) the remaining "outskirts," and (4) thoroughfares (including one in the Stock Yards district), and (5) combine the remaining comfortable, poor, and Stock Yards streets.

Fully half the "bad" neighborhoods in the Syracuse column are not notably vicious, but they are miserable streets, not classifiable under any other of these heads. "Jewry" would include nearly all the thoroughfares and some "other decent streets." As between the good localities and outskirts in Chicago, it might perhaps be fairer to transfer from the former to the latter the

NEIGHBORHOODS IN SYRACUSE AND CHICAGO CASES

	Syracuse	Chicago
Good.....	13.0%	18.0%
Bad.....	19.9*	17.0
Outskirts.....	13.0	12.0
Thoroughfares.....	....	14.0
"Jewry".....	16.5	....
Other decent streets.....	31.0	39.0
Unknown.....	6.6	....
	100.0	100.0

*8.9 vicious; 11 wretched canal section.

two cases classed as both in the former table. In general, the standard for pronouncing a section good or bad was doubtless somewhat lower with the Chicago cases.

On the whole, similarity is close enough to waken interest, when we realize that one set of cases came from a town of 100,000; the other, from a metropolis of nearly 2,000,000. From both tables we may safely conclude that rather poor back streets and outskirts that are decent, but utterly uninteresting, furnish many more delinquent boys than do the vicious sections—apparently some three times as many. In one way this is not significant for the former sections have more than three times the population of the latter; but from another standpoint it is both significant and encouraging, for it is evidence that more boys need the positive help of direction toward objects of wholesome interest than need the practically impossible negative help of abolishing vicious quarters. The large percentage coming from thoroughfares in Chicago—and also presumably in Syracuse, where the vicious and the Jewish sections lie along thoroughfares—will hardly surprise those who know the street life and the lack of play space in such quarters.

Of the 17 from comfortable streets in Chicago, 4 are not characteristically delinquent; 8 lack the care of their own fathers, either through death or separation of the parents; 1 of these and 1 other have no mother; 1 has drinking parents; and only 3 are left for us to class as delinquent in spite of circumstances apparently favorable. One of the 3 would seem to be an instinctive liar, if such a thing exists; 1 has an apparently irresistible

impulse to steal; and the third, a boy with a harelip is a smoker and generally incorrigible. Of the 17, 2 are known to be members of a regular gang, and 3 others are influenced strongly by bad associates.

This brings us to the subject of *gangs* in general—that baleful influence that turns good neighborhoods bad, gives every member an excuse in every other member, and can produce a net result of youthful deviltry far ahead of any aggregate of misdeeds the members would individually commit. Of the 100 cases, 20 were brought in with one other (not all of the “others” appear in our final list), and 25 with more than one other—a total of 45 who were in gang mischief. Five more are specifically recorded as having bad associates, and in at least 4 other cases there is known to be a bad gang in the neighborhood. How many were regular gang members, we cannot tell—probably a number more than the 13 so reported. On this point, again, Syracuse statistics correspond with those of Chicago boys. Of the 70 cases in the smaller town where information under this head was available, 51.4 per cent. were brought into court with others.

SUMMARY OF APPARENT CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY

Death or absence of one or both actual parents.	48 cases
Mother gainfully employed more or less regularly	30 “
(In 8 of which the father is missing)	
Very large families (more than 10).	3 “
Poverty in.	36 “
Bad condition of home.	30 “
Probable ditto.	3 “
No home.	1 case
Bad neighborhood influences.	36 cases
Apparent gang connection	50 “

Setting aside gang connections (which, after all, are result as well as cause, and temptation to which is too general to be reckoned on quite the same basis as individual family conditions), the leading cause of delinquency would seem to be the loss or absence of parents. Poverty, bad neighborhoods, and bad homes take practically equal rank in the list; often, of course, they occur together. Employment of mothers is a factor almost as

frequent, caused often by poverty, and itself leading to bad home conditions. It practically adds a considerable percentage to that indicating lack of normal parental care through loss of parents by death or separation.

This mass of causal factors discovered among 100 actual cases would abundantly justify the thesis stated in section II, if they could but be distributed evenly throughout the list. This, of course, they are not. They themselves are causally interrelated, and occur in many instances together. How nearly they do account for all the hundred cases will be made apparent in the concluding section. Meanwhile, they give us definite content for our general thesis, and we may accordingly declare, not only that most juvenile delinquency is due to obvious causes, easily discoverable in each case, but also that most prominent among these causes are loss of parents and bad home conditions, economic, hygienic, and social (or relating to neighborhood).

IV. STUDY OF THE 100 CASES AS EXHIBITING SUFFICIENCY OR LACK OF OBVIOUS CAUSE. FINAL DEFENSE OF THE THESIS

For this final study mere counting of cases that show abnormalities of condition will not suffice. It would be idle to fix an arbitrary number of abnormalities to be considered as sufficient cause in all cases for delinquency. We can but apply ordinary human judgment—trained, perhaps by experience with such boys and their parents—to each particular case in the light of all known data regarding it, and then classify it as having or not having sufficient obvious cause. Accordingly three classes have been differentiated, and a table of what seem the main causes made for each as an aid to more intensive study of them. The three classes include (1) those cases where conditions are obviously against the boy; where, in other words, delinquency would naturally be expected; (2) those showing somewhat less though still reasonably sufficient external cause, where the boy would apparently have about an even chance of keeping out of court; and (3) those where no reasonably sufficient cause has been discovered, taking into account all conditions known, and balancing advan-

tages with drawbacks.¹² It is by no means intended to imply that none of those classed under (3) have sufficient cause for their delinquency in the very parental and home conditions we have just been studying. Indeed, their records show just such abnormalities. Present knowledge merely does not warrant the statement that these abnormalities are with them effective causes of delinquency.

The classifications in the following tables differ somewhat from those previously used. The effort is no longer to find what are the causes of delinquency, but rather in how many cases is there indisputable cause of any sort. Therefore most inclusive terms are most convenient. For instance, bad homes as the immediate outcome of parental character appear only as such conditions are subsumed under general parental incapacity and neglect.

CASES HAVING SUFFICIENT OBVIOUS CAUSE

Parents or guardians incapable or neglectful.....	32
(One or both actual parents missing, 8)	
Parents separated*.....	3
Boy at hotel.....	1
Influenced by gang.....	1
Influenced by bad neighborhood.....	1
Home bad, largely through economic conditions.....	9
Father dead, mother at work.....	5
*Parents separated, mother at work.....	1
Low neighborhood.....	3
Bad neighborhood and gang.....	1
Total.....	45

¹² Our original monographic tabulation of all data would show in detail the grounds for our distribution of cases among these classes, and furnish our thesis better support than any statistics of the classes when differentiated. As the printing of this table is, however, impracticable, we give the more salient facts from the first cases assigned to classes (1) and (2) as types to indicate more concretely our basis of classification.

(1) I, orphan of 13 years, living with complainant, an immoral sister. II, boy of 14 sent to reformatory for stealing, home ill-kept, parents culpably neglectful in opinion of probation officer. III and IV, boys of 13 with inefficient fathers and wretched basement homes. One family (Polish) includes 7 children and ignorant, incapable mother; the other (Italian), 6 children, whose mother helps at cheese-making in hot and dirty living-room.

(2) 4 boys of 14 and 15. I and II have widowed mothers and bad associates.

CASES WITH LESS CAUSE	
One or both parents dead or deserted	16
(Remaining parent remarried, 2)	
Unsuitable adopted parents	1
Special temptation	11
Into bad gang	8
Violent, drinking father (good mother)	1
Through apparently innate weakness or subnormality	3
Total	29
CASES WITHOUT SUFFICIENT CAUSE APPARENT	
Delinquency not characteristic	13
Parents dead or not in the United States	5
Subnormal or easily led	2
(Also 1 under last head)	
Unexplained	6
Total	26

Of the last 6 cases very bad influences may have come from adjacent neighborhoods in 2; in 1 the immediate offense was due to race-feeling between Jews and Irish; 1 was that of a youngster fascinated with the trick of giving false fire alarms; 1 boy was the incorrigible "natural liar" previously mentioned; and 1, the son of a boarding-house keeper.

The three tables might be briefly summarized as follows:

GENERAL TABLE OF CAUSES	
Guardianship inadequate	58
Through character of guardians	34*
Through lack of parent	24†
Home bad through poverty	9
(Fathers lacking, 6)	
Special temptation into gangs	9
Subnormality in intellect or will	5
Total	81

* Including adopted parents and drinking father from second table.

† Including 3 cases of separation from first table.

Thirteen of the remaining 19 are really not delinquent boys. Out of 87 cases, then, where explanation of delinquency may be

III lives near many vicious boys and has a brother also delinquent. IV has a violent drinking father not on good terms with the mother, and an older brother formerly delinquent.

demand, we have obvious and reasonably sufficient cause for from 74 to 81, according as we include or exclude cases of subnormality and lack of parents from the last of the three class tables. The bulk of the delinquency represented by our cases would surely seem to be explained—and almost entirely—by loss of parents and by home conditions. The latter, too, are in all but 12 cases¹³ internal conditions of the home itself, not relating to its locality, and are directly due to the character of the guardians or the loss of actual parents. The 12 cases of special neighborhood and gang temptations would presumably not have occurred were the home advantageously located. How many of the remaining 5 cases¹⁴ of subnormality are due to defective nutrition and training it is impossible to say. They are all cases apparently amenable to training, or they would not be undertaken by the court.

These conclusions may be disheartening to those who would fain go forth and remedy the causes found in such investigations. We cannot bring back dead parents, nor can we thoroughly reform and train the evil and incompetent. Nevertheless, home conditions can be greatly modified by numerous modern ameliorative agencies, each one a boundless field for extension and improvement. Such are all sanitary provisions for the building and regulation of the home or the health and safety of its inmates, together with economic measures like workingmen's insurance or the relief of fatherless families in their homes, and all reforms by which delinquent parents are increasingly brought to the cognizance of the court, or clubs and lectures are instituted for the less-favored fathers and mothers to awaken interest while instructing in parental duty, or by which, when as a last resort children must be given new homes, the placing-out system properly administered is substituted for the old "institutionalizing" orphanage. Besides all this, remembering that in most cases the immediate suggestion to a lawless act comes from without the home, we may turn hopefully to "preventive work" with the boys

¹³ The last 4 of the first, and the 8 gang cases of the second table.

¹⁴ Three in the second, and 2 in the third table.

themselves, seeking to develop healthy interests and power of self-direction and control. In this field we have the movements for play space and supervision, physical training, wholesome amusements, transformation of street gangs into orderly clubs, improvement of the schools with increased use of the ungraded room, and finally the extension and perfection of the whole reformatory system, as preventive for the future, with its special industrial and truant schools, its juvenile courts, and above all its probation officers, who supply directly to the largest possible circle of young offenders much of the good influence their natural parents lack.

Better than all these is undoubtedly a good home with two good parents; but where that is impossible, let us not despair. If the natural prop is gone, the normal limb removed, we have always to make the best possible substitute, thankful that we know definitely what is missing, and have not to fight blind fate or dark obsession; that, though the artificial limb can never be a sound live leg, yet with it the patient may get about to do his share of the great world's work.